



**Mercantile  
Money Museum**

MUSIC AND MONEY  
at the  
MERCANTILE MONEY MUSEUM

Mercantile Tower  
Seventh & Washington  
St. Louis, Mo. 63101  
314-421-1819

Musicians and music are the subjects of coins and bank notes from around the world. Beethoven, Brahms, Chopin, Debussy, Stephen Foster and Verdi are just some of the composers who have been honored monetarily.

Gene Hessler, curator of the Mercantile Money Museum who is also a professional musician, has assembled an exhibit that will fascinate museum visitors.

As Berlioz raises his baton on a French note, the chorus from Wagner's Tannhäuser performs on a coin from E. Germany: Chopin watches. Scott Joplin and Duke Ellington have been honored on U.S. postage stamps, but, the only American musician to be seen on a U.S. coin is Stephen Foster. His portrait appears on a 50¢ piece that was issued in 1936 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Cincinnati as a music center.

In most instances portraits appear on these coins and bank notes, but there are examples where a few bars of a recognized composition are included in the design. Next to the portrait of Johann Strauss, on an Austrian note, is the opening refrain of The Blue Danube. A German coin includes a theme from the 4th Symphony of Brahms.

The Mercantile Money Museum, a cooperative undertaking of the Mercantile Bank and the Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society, is on the podium level at 7th & Washington, accessible from the St. Louis Centre. The museum is open Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Groups are welcome; the telephone number is 425-8199.



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Location: Mercantile Bank Tower, 7th & Washington Streets,  
St. Louis, MO 63101

Hours: 9 AM - 4 PM Every day (including holidays)

Admission: FREE

Information or tours: (314) 421-1819 or (314) 425-8199

Contact person: Thomas Serfass, Curator

Our location has added convenience because the Mercantile Bank Tower is connected to the St. Louis Centre by skywalk, so you can visit the museum without even going outside if you are downtown shopping at the mall. The Money Museum is free, and our hours are 9 AM to 4 PM every day (including holidays). Normally tours are given during the week, but weekend tours are possible on a limited basis. Tours are purely optional as the museum is designed for self-guided viewing.

The Mercantile Money Museum is based on the collection of Eric P. Newman an internationally recognized expert in numismatics which provides for a wide variety of exhibits. Although contained in one large room, the collection presents money from over 100 countries and traces American history from the colonial era to the present day. We even have money from countries which no longer exist- have you seen any Transylvanian money lately? Currently, we have coins and currency from the former Soviet Union and Imperial Russia on display. Find out about the important role of Blacks, Women and Indians in American money. Did you know that Indian wampum was legal tender in Massachusetts Bay colony for a time? But that is only the start.

Money can be fun, so we liven up the collection with gadgets. Two audio visual mannequins explain Benjamin Franklin's involvement in colonial money and a counterfeiter in prison garb explains the punishments suffered by those who copied money in colonial days. We also have coin scales used in the Wild West and during the California gold rush, counterfeit detectors used by bankers, coin changers from the 19th century and an oriental money shovel. You can only "spend" pennies in our museum. We have no gift shop but you can use your pennies to make your own souvenir in our penny press, which elongates your penny and imprints a design on it.

Counterfeit money from England and the Confederacy is on display along with several other examples to test your detecting savvy. We also have genuine money which you might think is counterfeit. Ever see a genuine \$3 bill? Ever wonder where the phrase "two-bits" comes from and what a "bit" is? Do you know why share prices on the stock exchanges are listed in eighths of a dollar? Ever see a bill with two different denominations? Come to the Mercantile Money Museum and find the answers to these questions and many more. We hope you will visit us soon.



## BURIED TREASURE IN ST. LOUIS

The Mercantile Money Museum located in the Mercantile Bank Tower at Seventh and Washington streets downtown has been open to the public for nearly ten years. Yet many St. Louisians are unaware of its existence. The Mercantile Money Museum is open seven days a week 9 AM to 4 PM and the admission is free. The bank tower is also connected by skywalk to the St. Louis Centre which can be convenient for lunch. The only expense associated with a visit to the museum would be parking in the downtown area. Of course, you could "spend" a penny or two to make your own souvenir using the Money Museum's penny roller which flattens your penny and imprints a design, but that is up to each visitor.

This one room museum features the fine collection of Eric P. Newman who is an internationally recognized expert in the field of numismatics. Money from around the world is on display along with examples of American money which illustrate our history from colonial times to the present. We also have an exhibit of Russian and Soviet money which provides a cultural glimpse of that nation over the last 250 years. Over 100 countries have their money on display, even if some of them no longer exist, (have you seen any Transylvanian money lately ?), or have changed their names. Learn how important Spanish money was to the growing American colonies and see genuine \$3 bills. Find out about the important role played by Women, Blacks and Native Americans in the development of our money. Did you know that Indian wampum was legal tender in Massachusetts Bay colony for a time ? Ever wonder where the phrase "two bits" comes from or why stock share prices are denominated in eights of a dollar ? The answers to these questions and much more await you at the Mercantile Money Museum.

Two audio visual mannequins liven up the collection. Benjamin Franklin explains his role in colonial finance and a counterfeiter in prison garb recounts the punishments which discourage his activities. In addition the Money Museum has a marvelous collection of gadgets relating to money. Coin scales used in the Wild West, counterfeit detecting kits used by bankers, coin changers dating back to the nineteenth century and an oriental money shovel are all on display. Clever counterfeits, altered bank bills and goofy errors are also there to be seen and enjoyed.

Students and field trips are especially welcome as the museum has a strong commitment to education. The most popular program is the scavenger hunt where the students must find the answers to questions by examining the exhibited material. It is also possible to tailor programs to the specific needs of most curriculum. The subjects of history, math, art and geography can all be accommodated with relative ease.

The museum restricts groups to approximately 50 at a time based on space constraints. Reservations for tours or class programs can be made by calling the museum at 421-1819. Scouting or club organizations can also book weekend or holiday tours on a limited basis. The Mercantile Money Museum offers a fascinating look at American and world history through the devices people use to make exchanging goods easier. Uncover the treasure and visit the Money Museum soon.